

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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L.D. 247

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Date: 6/7/21

(Filing No. S-202)

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EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS

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STATE OF MAINE

6

SENATE

7

130TH LEGISLATURE

8

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

9

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT "A" to S.P. 108, L.D. 247, "An Act To Improve
10 Maine's Education System"

11

Amend the bill by striking out the title and substituting the following:

12

**'Resolve, To Reestablish the Commission To Study College Affordability and College
13 Completion'**

14

Amend the bill by striking out everything after the title and inserting the following:

15

'Emergency preamble. Whereas, acts and resolves of the Legislature do not
16 become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted as emergencies; and

17

Whereas, this legislation needs to take effect before the expiration of the 90-day
18 period in order to allow the commission established in this resolve sufficient time to
19 complete its work; and

20

Whereas, in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts create an emergency within
21 the meaning of the Constitution of Maine and require the following legislation as
22 immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety; now,
23 therefore, be it

24

Sec. 1. Commission established. Resolved: That the Commission To Study
25 College Affordability and College Completion, referred to in this resolve as "the
26 commission," is established.

27

Sec. 2. Membership. Resolved: That, notwithstanding Joint Rule 353, the
28 commission consists of 14 members as follows:

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1. The President of the Senate shall appoint:

30

A. Two members of the Senate who serve on the Joint Standing Committee on
31 Education and Cultural Affairs, including one member of the party holding the largest
32 and one member of the party holding the 2nd largest number of seats in the Legislature;

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B. One person representing a statewide association of independent higher education
34 institutions;

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

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C. One person representing a statewide association of student financial aid directors;
and

D. One person who is a school counselor in a public high school in the State and who
is involved in advising high school students on college admissions and financial aid;

2. The Speaker of the House shall appoint:

A. Three members of the House of Representatives who serve on the Joint Standing
Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs, including 2 members of the party
holding the largest and one member of the party holding the 2nd largest number of
seats in the Legislature;

B. One person with expertise in higher education policy issues representing a nonprofit
entity in the State that provides financial assistance to students or to high schools to
assist students with college enrollment; and

C. One person with expertise in higher education policy issues representing a statewide
education policy research institute;

3. The Chancellor of the University of Maine System or the chancellor's designee;

4. The President of the Maine Community College System or the president's designee;

5. The President of the Maine Maritime Academy or the president's designee; and

6. The Chief Executive Officer of the Finance Authority of Maine or the chief executive
officer's designee.

Sec. 3. Chairs. Resolved: That the first-named Senate member is the Senate chair
and the first-named House of Representatives member is the House chair of the
commission.

Sec. 4. Appointments; convening of commission. Resolved: That all
appointments must be made no later than 30 days following the effective date of this
resolve. The appointing authorities shall notify the Executive Director of the Legislative
Council once all appointments have been completed. Within 15 days after appointment of
all members, the chairs shall call and convene the first meeting of the commission, which
must be no later than 30 days following the appointment of all members.

Sec. 5. Duties. Resolved: That the commission shall review the work of the 2014
Commission To Study College Affordability and College Completion, as established by
Resolve 2013, chapter 109, and examine and make recommendations on the development
of strategies to keep the cost of public postsecondary education in the State affordable and
to increase the graduation rate of students enrolled in state-supported public institutions of
higher education. In developing strategies and reviewing related cost issues, the
commission shall:

1. Examine and update the Maine college affordability gap analysis conducted as part
of the work of the 2014 commission;

2. Review average debt incurred by students graduating from community colleges and
public universities in the State, the Maine Maritime Academy and private universities in
the State with 2-year and 4-year undergraduate degrees;

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT

1 3. Review average debt incurred by students who begin but do not complete courses
2 of study at community colleges and public universities in the State, the Maine Maritime
3 Academy and private universities in the State and who do not transfer elsewhere to
4 complete a course of study;

5 4. Review average debt incurred by students completing courses of study from, or
6 attending but not completing courses of study from, institutions offering credentials of
7 value other than 2-year or 4-year undergraduate degrees, not including graduate degrees;

8 5. Examine the impact of student loan debt on borrowers;

9 6. Examine the capacity of high school counselors and academic advisors in high
10 schools in the State to adequately advise students regarding their options for postsecondary
11 education, including career and technical education, and financing of postsecondary
12 education; and

13 7. Examine the potential impacts of no-cost community college education on the
14 workforce of in the State.

15 **Sec. 6. Staffing assistance; information. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint
16 Rule 353, the University of Maine System, the Maine Community College System and the
17 Maine Maritime Academy shall provide staffing assistance to the commission. The Finance
18 Authority of Maine shall provide the commission with access to any nonconfidential
19 aggregate information in its student financial assistance database for postsecondary
20 education students in the State necessary to carry out the duties pursuant to section 5. At
21 the request of the commission, the Legislative Council may provide drafting assistance to
22 the commission during a regular or special session and other staff support to the
23 commission when the Legislature is not in regular or special session.

24 **Sec. 7. Report; recommendations. Resolved:** That, notwithstanding Joint Rule
25 353, the commission shall submit a report containing its findings and recommendations
26 pursuant to section 5, including any recommendations for legislation, to the Joint Standing
27 Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by January 2, 2022. The joint standing
28 committee may submit a bill related to this report to the Second Regular Session of the
29 130th Legislature.

30 **Sec. 8. Outside funding for commission activities. Resolved:** That the
31 commission may, but is not required to, seek outside funds to provide staff support,
32 consulting or other services or to fund the costs of carrying out the duties and requirements
33 of the commission. Contributions to support the work of the commission may not be
34 accepted from any party having a pecuniary or other vested interest in the outcome of the
35 matters being studied. Any person, other than a state agency, authorized and desiring to
36 make a financial or in-kind contribution must certify to the Legislative Council that it has
37 no pecuniary or other vested interest in the outcome of the commission's activities. All
38 contributions are subject to approval by the Legislative Council. All contributions accepted
39 must be forwarded to the Executive Director of the Legislative Council along with an
40 accounting record that includes the amount of contributions, the date the contributions were
41 received, from whom the contributions were received and the purpose of and any limitation
42 on the use of those contributions. The Executive Director of the Legislative Council shall
43 administer the contributions and shall notify the chairs of the commission when those
44 contributions have been received.

P.D. 8

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Emergency clause. In view of the emergency cited in the preamble, this legislation takes effect when approved.'

Amend the bill by relettering or renumbering any nonconsecutive Part letter or section number to read consecutively.

SUMMARY

This amendment reestablishes the 2014 Commission To Study College Affordability and College Completion. It adds a high school counselor to the original list of commission members. It directs the commission to:

1. Examine and update the Maine college affordability gap analysis conducted as part of the work of the 2014 commission;

2. Review average debt incurred by students graduating from community colleges and public universities in the State, the Maine Maritime Academy and private universities in the State with 2-year and 4-year undergraduate degrees;

3. Review average debt incurred by students who begin but do not complete courses of study at community colleges and public universities in the State, the Maine Maritime Academy and private universities in the State and who do not transfer elsewhere to complete a course of study;

4. Review average debt incurred by students completing courses of study from, or attending but not completing courses of study from, institutions offering credentials of value other than 2-year or 4-year undergraduate degrees, not including graduate degrees;

5. Examine the impact of student loan debt on borrowers;

6. Examine the capacity of high school counselors and academic advisors in high schools in the State to adequately advise students regarding their options for postsecondary education, including career and technical education, and financing of postsecondary education; and

7. Examine the potential impacts of no-cost community college education on the workforce of the State.

It requires the commission to submit a report containing its findings and recommendations, including any recommendations for legislation, to the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs by January 2, 2022. The joint standing committee may submit a bill related to this report to the Second Regular Session of the 130th Legislature.

FISCAL NOTE REQUIRED
(See attached)



130th MAINE LEGISLATURE

LD 247

LR 1537(02)

An Act To Improve Maine's Education System

Fiscal Note for Bill as Amended by Committee Amendment "A" (S-202)
Committee: Education and Cultural Affairs

Fiscal Note Required: Yes

Fiscal Note

Legislative Cost/Study

Legislative Cost/Study

The general operating expenses of this study are projected to be \$2,750 in fiscal year 2021-22. The Legislature's budget for the 2022-2023 biennium includes \$10,000 in fiscal year 2021-22 and \$10,000 in fiscal year 2022-23 for the costs of legislative studies, as well as \$21,260 of balances carried over from prior years for this purpose. Whether these amounts are sufficient to fund all studies will depend on the number of studies authorized by the Legislative Council and the Legislature. The additional costs of providing staffing assistance to the study during the interim can be absorbed utilizing existing budgeted staff resources.

Fiscal Detail and Notes

Additional costs to the University of Maine System, the Maine Community College System and Maine Maritime Academy to serve on the task force and to provide staffing assistance to the task force can be absorbed within existing budgeted resources. Additional costs to the Finance Authority of Maine to serve on the task force and to provide access to nonconfidential data on student financial assistance for postsecondary education students in the State can also be absorbed within existing budgeted resources.